





















## ADOPTING A PET: CHOOSING THE RIGHT BREED FOR YOUR FAMILY

By Sandy Dufresne

There's a person giving away a "free" puppy in front of Safeway. The giver says it's a small dog, a Jack Russell Terrier, Chihuahua mix. Mom's walking into Safeway with her three kids, all under 8. The kids are begging, "Please, Mommy. He's little. He won't eat much. We'll take care of him, and the Landlord said we could have a dog in our apartment." Mom admits, he is awfully cute and how much work can he be. After all, the kids are right, he is little and he probably won't eat much (never mind that Mom already knows she'll be taking care of the Little Fella).

But . . . this is what Mom doesn't know: Jack Russells tend to be extremely intelligent, athletic, fearless, and vocal dogs. It is not uncommon for these dogs to become moody or destructive if not properly stimulated and exercised, as they have a tendency to bore easily and will often create their own fun when left alone to entertain themselves.

Obedience classes are also recommended to potential owners, as Jack Russells can be stubborn at times and aggressive towards other animals and humans if not properly socialized. Despite their small size, these dogs are not recommended for the condominium or apartment dweller unless the owner is ready to take on the daunting task of providing the dog with the necessary amount of exercise and stimulation. They have a tremendous amount of energy for their size, a fact which can sometimes lead to trouble involving larger animals. They may seem never to tire and will still be energetic after their owner has called it a day. While socialized members of the breed are friendly towards children, they will not tolerate abuse even if it is unintentional.

Wow, all of a sudden the Little Fella is starting to sound like he may be a problem. Well, wait, he's not all Jack Russell, he's part Chihuahua, so that should help. So, let's find out about the Chihuahua.

A Chihuahua must be chosen with care, as the temperament of its owner can make a difference in the temperament of the pup. Ill-tempered Chihuahuas can be easily provoked to attack, and are therefore generally unsuitable for homes with small children. The breed tends to be fiercely loyal to one particular owner and in some cases may become over protective of the person, especially around other people or animals. They do not always get along with other breeds, and tend to have a "clannish" nature, often preferring the companionship of other Chihuahuas over other dogs. These traits generally make them unsuitable for households with children that are not patient and calm...



Goodness, what happened to that cute little Fella!!! I'm going to stop here with this little story because I think we can all see where it's going.

Adopting this Little Fella would most likely be a BIG mistake in this situation. Unfortunately, this is not an unusual occurrence. Many of us have probably brought an animal into our lives that perhaps was not the "right fit." I know I have. So, what are we supposed to do it to enable us to make the best decision we can.

My first, second and third suggestions would be research, research, research. There are many helpful sites on the internet that give you the opportunity to answer pertinent questions for

adopting a dog. Some issues you may want to consider:

***Do you want a puppy or an older dog?***

If you adopt a puppy, do you have the time and inclination to housebreak the little one? Do you want to deal with the possibility of having your furniture chewed or woodwork chewed up? If you adopt an older dog, are you able to afford the medical issues that may require treatment, surgery and/or medications? Are you willing to be patient with, and have the time to deal with whatever “baggage” this dog may have due to the treatment or neglect he received at the hands of his previous owner?

***Do you want a big dog or a small dog?***

Can you afford to feed a Great Dane? Do you mind listening to some of those little dogs who like to bark (I have two Dachshunds-they like to bark, a lot.)

***Do you want a dog to hike with you or go running with you?***

Then you don't want a Chihuahua. On the other hand, if you like to lounge and take slow, leisurely walks, you don't want a Lab or a Border Collie. Is the size of the dog you want conducive to the size and health of your family members?

You probably don't want an energetic American Bulldog or Great Dane if you have an elderly parent or small children in your family. Running, jumping, playing by these types of dogs can be frightening and dangerous to small children or elderly folks, with no ill intent on the part of the pet.

***Do you have allergies?***

Do you mind grooming your dog (brushing, bathing, etc.), or can you afford to pay a groomer

for those breeds that need a professional groomer (Poodles, Shih Tzu's, Briards, etc.)?

***Do you have time for a pet?***

Dogs are pack animals, they feel happiest and most secure with they are with their pack (you and your family). They need your time and attention.

***Are you willing to invest in their future with you and your family?***

It is important that your dog understand his place in the pack. Are you able to take your pet to obedience classes so you learn to be the alpha dog, and your dog learns you are in charge. Do you have time to go for walks to bond with your pet. Is there time to brush your pet, bath your pet, clip his nails, clean his ears? So much to do-so little time. Where will he fit into your life.

***Can you really afford to have a dog (or cat, or bird, or ferret)?***

The reality is that there is no such thing as a “free” puppy. Because once they are yours you are responsible for their care, including vaccines, spaying or neutering, a minimum of one visit a year to your veterinarian. As your pet sage there will be health issues, just as with humans, such as arthritis, glaucoma, respiratory issues, diabetes that require additional time and money.

There are many issues to consider when adopting a pet. These are just a few for your consideration. The internet provides unlimited resources to assist you in making an educated and responsible decision about adopting the right pet for your family.

One of my favorite reference guides is book (yes, I'm old fashioned and still like the feeling of a book in my hands) Simon & Schuster's "GUIDE TO DOGS." It is available in paperback, has at



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least 300 dog breeds with great photos. What I most enjoy about this Guide is besides providing the breed standards, such as shoulder height, color, weight and history of the breed Simon & Schuster's "GUIDE TO DOGS" also provides personality information in a very easy-to-read format. Each breed has icons next to the photo indicating if the breed is good with children or if the breed has a proclivity to bite or if it is meant to be a guard dog, or can the breed sleep outside. Important information for making the right choice.

*Animal Planet* offers a breed selector quiz at <http://animal.discovery.com/breed-selector/dog-breeds.html> which you might find useful and fun. You may be surprised at what breeds fit best into your life.

The right choice of pet can bring you years of laughter, comfort and unconditional love- for you and your family.

## MEET OUR NEW STAFF MEMBERS

**ASHLEY**—My name is Ashlee. I started working for Circle L Animal Hospital in the beginning of September. I have loved all animals since I was very young. When I was ten I started begging my mom for a horse, and when I was eleven I started begging for a dog. I didn't get the dog or the horse, but when I was around twelve, I came home from my father's house to find two beautiful kittens, Max and Molly.

Max and I shared a special bond. He would sleep with me over anyone else in the house, and curl up in my lap when I read. In 2009, he was diagnosed with immune mediated hemolytic anemia, IMHA. He had to have a blood transfusion and was kept stable with Prednisolone, but in early 2011 he relapsed and we ended up losing him. He will remain in my heart forever.

Shadow was my grandma's cat. She was a ferocious spitfire. When she decided she was done being touched, you knew it. But even so, she would curl up between my grandmothers feet every single night, and cry for her when she went out of town. She was diagnosed with renal failure at age twelve. We gave her Azodyl, put her on a kidney diet, and gave her subcutaneous fluids every other day. We lost her in late 2010 when we caught a large abdominal mass too late. Every pet owner knows what it feels like to lose a family friend. But we remember them forever, as best friends and children to everyone who knew them.

When I moved to Prescott, I gained two new best friends, my fiancée's two dogs. J.D. (or Bubba) and Riley. J.D. is a three year old male Rottweiler, who couldn't be more of a lover, and Riley is a brindle and white American Bulldog, who couldn't be more of a cuddle bug. It was a dream come true for me, since I've always wanted a dog. Now I have two.

I started working in the veterinary field when a good friend in high school told me that her mother's hospital was hiring. I applied, and was hired right out of high school at Verde Veterinary Hospital in Cottonwood as a receptionist. As anyone in the field would tell you, when you are just starting out there is a lot to learn. It was a five doctor practice, and the employees were like family. I loved working there. Two years later one of our doctors moved to Idaho, and we missed her greatly. VVH became AAHA accredited in 2010, and I left in December after three years employment to move back to Santa Cruz, CA, my hometown. In January of 2011, I was hired at Santa Cruz Veterinary Hospital. It is an AAHA accredited, 24 hour emergency/specialty practice, with a general practice as well. There were eleven doctors, so it was quite a shock moving from such a comparatively small practice. It was a wonderful place to work, but I left at the end of August to move to Prescott with my fiancée, Cameron, and was hired at Circle L two weeks later.

When I have the chance, I would love to train as a technician, and go to school to be certified, and I certainly have time to do that. I love animals, I love working in the veterinary field, and I cannot imagine doing anything else in life.

**KAYLA**—Hello I would like to introduce myself, my name is Kayla. I am new to the Circle L Family working as the Reception Manager since August of this year. I live in Chino Valley with the love of my life Kevin and two dog's Roxy and Zenda. I was born in Tulsa, Oklahoma then moved to Orange County California in 1972. I worked for The Eye Clinic For Animals in Orange County CA. from 1994 until 2003 then started in the Graphic Design Industry until I moved to Chino Valley in July 2011. I enjoy boxing and softball and love animals. Next time your in the hospital ask for me, I would love to meet you and your pet and say hello!

**CHRISTINE**—My name is Christine Campbell. I was born in Washington DC and attended elementary, intermediate, and high schools in various parts of Northern Virginia. I left for active duty into the US Air Force right out of high school and stayed in for 8 years. I was an Aerospace Physiologist Specialist, which is a student pilot instructor for Phase I and III of Undergraduate Pilot Training. I was stationed at Lackland AFB, TX, Brooks, AFB, TX., Williams AFB, Az, and Randolph AFB, TX. I got out, had a family and now have two boys, Brandon and Christian, aged 11 and 6. We moved from Virginia to Paulden 5 months ago so I could attend Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University and have access to the flight line. I am in my Junior year there now, working on completing my degree in Aeronautical Science so that I can fly helicopters. I also have a degree in Applied Psychology from UOP.



From the entire staff at  
Circle L Animal Hospital